

**Woodstock Conservation Commission
Development Review Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2014**

Conservation Commission Members in attendance: Jean Pillo, Maura Robie, Bill Loftus, Lee Wesler, Bet Zimmerman (via cell phone)
Members of the Public: None.

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m.

The following land use change proposals were reviewed for compatibility with A Plan of Open Space and Conservation. Reports of current site conditions, conservation priorities and recommendations were generated and will be forwarded to the Woodstock Building Office, Town Planner, Planning and Zoning Commission, the Inland Wetland and Watercourse Agency, the Woodstock Green Team and will be made available to the applicant.

1. Review of 835 Route 169, Mark Reynolds, (Map 7280, Block 29, Lot 57) – Special event, motorcycle off-road race twice yearly
2. Review of 29 Plaine Hill Rd, Linemaster Switch – Proposal for event center.
3. Review of preliminary discussion of proposal to potentially install solar panels at the former landfill.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Maura Robie

These will not be considered official until voted on at the next full Woodstock Conservation Commission meeting.

Woodstock Conservation Commission (WCC)
Land Use Change/Development Review Report
January 14, 2014

RE: Proposed Special Event – Motorcycle off-road race twice yearly at 835 Route 169, Mark Reynolds (Map 7280, Block 29, Lot 57)

Description: Applicant plans to hold Off-road Motorcycle events, working in conjunction with J Day Off-road, a professional event organizer. Tentatively set for two days (9 to 5) in the months of February and April, with an estimate of between 200-450 entrants and spectators. Races to take place on currently existing trails of approximately 2 miles in length through forest. Safety, traffic, parking, sanitation, and vendors are to be handled by organizer, and trails are to be restored to original state after event completion.

This land use proposal does allow for active recreation, continued agricultural use, and maintenance of open space.

Site conditions includes:

- Approximately 60% forested, 16% active agricultural land – 3 fields, including 2 hayfields, and 15% wetlands, including a stream.
- This site contains Prime Agricultural Soils where the existing farm fields are located.
- Property also has a commercial land use – Christmas Barn in NW corner.
- Portions of the land is in the PA-490 program.
- The property currently has approximately 2 miles of off-road trails being used for private motorcycle recreation.
- It is located within Putnam public water supply watershed.
- Has western frontage along a National Scenic Byway, Route 169.
- Surrounded by hundreds of acres of agricultural and forest lands with residential use to the north, southeast, and southwest.

Conservation Concerns/Priorities Based on site conditions and open space priorities.

- Maintain open space and agricultural potential of prime agricultural soils. This proposal appears to be compatible with A Plan of Open Space and Conservation for achieving open space goals.
- Significant noise from the motorcycle/ATV operation can be expected, and could carry for some distance. It is not clear whether anything will be done to buffer noise impacts to effected nearby residential areas.
- Potential impacts on wildlife is uncertain as there is no data quantifying the species diversity onsite.
- Field use as a parking area may significantly compact the soil and increase runoff rates.
- Wetlands drain and stream on the property drain toward Muddy Brook and Roseland Lake.
- Impacts to scenic vista should be minimized, as property is located on scenic road Route 169.
- Increased road traffic associated with these events will have associated noise and air pollution impacts.

Recommendations:

- Parking should be limited to designated fields, with follow up on any erosion control measures such as regrading and reseeding grass areas as needed.
- A noise barrier of evergreen trees along the property perimeter may help muffle noise impacts but may negatively impact the scenic view of the property from Route 169.
- Implement BMPs on the agricultural land that will reduce soil compaction and improve rain water infiltration. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is a good resource for healthy soils and BMP strategies.

- There are 2 existing trail crossings over wetlands/watercourses. With a need to maintain and improve existing water quality in Muddy Brook (impaired due to excess bacteria) and Roseland Lake (impaired due to excess nutrients), proper erosion & sediment control barriers should be utilized so as to cause no deleterious impact to wetlands and watercourses on the property and downstream water resources. E&S plans should be approved and inspected by qualified professionals before race events.
- It is unknown what plans are in place for fuel storage and vehicle refueling on site. With a concentration of vehicles potentially requiring on-site refueling, a fuel spill management plan should be in place for cleaning up this potential source of contaminants. Fuel storage/refueling should be limited to a confined area.
- There should be sufficient waste disposal of trash/recyclables during and after the event, leaving the area clean and free of debris. Recyclables will need to be collected and managed per state and local laws.
- Measures should be taken to reduce impacts of erosion to the race course, and surrounding environment during the event. Impacted areas should be returned to their original state after the event.

Disclaimer: Any recommendations made by the Conservation Commission are advisory in nature only and are not guaranteed to be accepted by the Planning and Zoning Commission or the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Agency during their review of the same property. A site walk to ground truth the content of this report based on the GIS data is recommended.



NECCOG GIS parcel viewer, 1/17/2014, 835 Rte. 169

**Woodstock Conservation Commission
Land Use Change/Development Review Report
January 14, 2014**

RE: Proposal for event center by Linemaster Switch at 29 Plaine Hill Rd.

Description: Linemaster Switch is proposing to build a new Banquet Facility next to the existing Mansion at Bald Hill.

Site conditions include:

- The most important concern on the property is the status of Superfund Site and associated Environmental Use Restrictions.
- Surrounding land use is farmland (to the West), residential (to the South and East) and commercial (to the North)
- The property has an operating industrial facility (Linemaster Switch) and a B&B (The Mansion), gardens, lawn areas, and wooded areas.

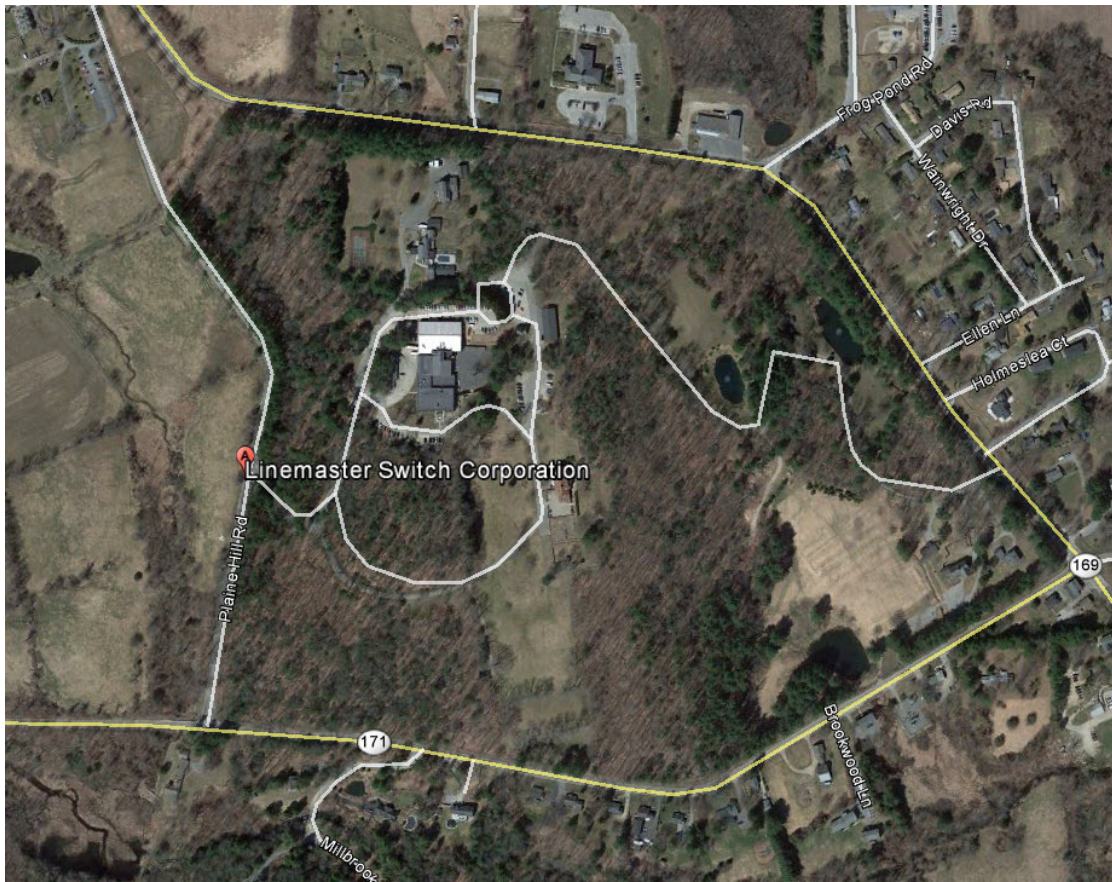
Conservation Priorities:

- Prevention of contaminated groundwater from impacting nearby drinking water wells both onsite and on nearby residential properties.
- Increased use of ground water at this site that is displaced into the public sewer system may impact ground water flow.

Recommendations:

- As a former Superfund site, increasing water runoff and disturbing soil have the potential to interfere with any in situ contamination and treatment technologies (soil and groundwater). This does not imply that the banquet facility is not a compatible use for the property; it only implies that the property owners will need to go through a higher level of review with EPA and State of CT DEEP.
- Applicant should consult with DEEP and EPA for further guidance of the proposed activity on this site. Mark Lewis of CT DEEP is the assigned project manager for Linemaster Switch. His email address is Mark.Lewis@ct.gov.

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Google Maps, 1/17/2014, Linemaster Switch Corporation

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RE: Proposal to potentially install solar panels at the former landfill, 49 Paine District Rd.

Description: Installation of a 1MW solar facility has been proposed at the former landfill, which is adjacent to the current transfer station

Site conditions include:

- Rolling open meadow surrounded by forested land.
- Access is via dirt road, which has historically had erosion problems.
- Several ponds are located down gradient of the landfill.
- The landfill is unsecured, meaning mixed waste was piled and buried at the site with no leachate containment system in place beneath the garbage. There is a high probability for ground water contamination in this area.
- When the landfill was closed, a clay cap was put on top (to minimize rainwater infiltration through garbage in order to minimize leachate generation), along with methane vents and groundwater monitoring wells.
- The current landcover over the clay cap is a meadow. The meadow is hayed annually to control woody vegetation growth. Historically, this has been done once per year around August, to allow grassland nesting birds to have one brood. About 20 bluebird nestboxes are also installed on the former landfill.
- The opposite side of Paine District Rd. is residential housing and farmland, and to the SW there is residential housing.
- There has been evidence of trespassing by ATVs at the landfill. There is also some woody vegetation (such as invasive Russian Olive) that has grown up on the cover.

Conservation Priorities:

- The Woodstock Conservation Commission supports the efforts of the Woodstock Green Team to increase the production of renewable energy in town.
- Grassland bird nesting habitat is in decline in Connecticut. If this property is utilized for a solar energy installation, minimize impacts to grassland bird habitat.
- Minimize impacts to groundwater and surface water quality down gradient of this site.

Recommendations:

- A cap in place is protecting groundwater quality, so the integrity of the cap needs to be preserved.
- Methane vents and groundwater monitoring wells must also be preserved. Coordinate with CT DEEP. Jessica Stefanowicz, who receives periodic reports regarding the results of the periodic groundwater monitoring that the Town is conducting at the landfill. Jessica can be reached at jessica.stefanowicz@ct.gov or (860) 424-3849.
- Similar projects are underway at several locations in Connecticut. Among other approvals, such work would need an authorization to disrupt the landfill from the Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division of our Bureau of Materials management and Compliance Assurance. A guidance document regarding this topic is available at http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/Permits_and_Licenses/Waste_Permits/disrupt_guid.pdf.
- Gabrielle Frigon, the Waste Engineering & Enforcement Division supervisor who handles landfills in the Woodstock area. She can be reached at gabrielle.frigon@ct.gov or (860) 424-3795.
- Remove woody vegetation growing on the cap and the public works department should develop a management plan for the site to prevent regeneration of deep rooted woody vegetation at the site.
- It would be desirable to continue measures that promote or allow for nesting of grassland birds and cavity-nesting birds.
- Maintain erosion controls to protect surface and groundwater.
- It is expected that weed control would be employed to avoid interference with sun reaching panels. An Integrated Pest Management Plan should be developed and followed to minimize the use of pesticides.
- Soil run-off also needs to be controlled during construction and operation. An Erosion and Sediment Control plan should be prepared by a qualified professional and inspected before and during any construction on the site.

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Google Maps, 1/17/2014, Woodstock Transfer Station